

BETTER TIMES

Produced for A.A. members, by A.A. members in the GTA



The 12 Steps

1. We admit we were powerless
over alcohol. Our lives had
become unmanageable.

Alcoholics
Anonymous

SEPTEMBER 2022



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MEDALLIONS

NAME	YEARS	GROUP	CELEBRATION
Rosemary D	25	Trial and Error Group	September 7th, 2022
Brenda B	1	Melrose Group	September 10th, 2022
Rebecca F	10	Pickering Unity Group	September 11th, 2022
Kelly D	20	Parkway Monday Meeting	September 12th, 2022
Ron C	45	Melrose Group	September 17th, 2022
Nick G	1	Friendly Group	September 19th, 2022
Howie B	40	Erin Mills Group	September 19th, 2022
John L	10	Friendly Group	September 26th, 2022
Jim Y	10	Erin Mills Group	September 26th, 2022
Simon W	10	Anniversary Group	September 28th, 2022

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Check out the following service opportunities. Express your interest by sending an email. It's that simple to give back what has been so freely given to you and me!

[Information Technology \(IT\)](#)
[Finance](#)
[Winter Season Open House](#)

[Twelfth Step & Phone Greeters](#)
[Operating \(formerly Executive\)](#)
[Communications](#)

The Winter Season Open House has been held by Toronto Intergroup since 1944 and open to all. The Open House will be seeking a limited number of volunteers, friends and family of program members to participate or help out. If you are interested in making a contribution or lending a hand contact wsoh@aatoronto.org, or talk to your Intergroup Representative for more information.

MEETING CHANGES

This pandemic has brought about incredible changes and quickly; please don't forget that our website and meeting list updates are dependant on you letting us know [here: https://www.aatoronto.org/update-or-change-a-meeting/](https://www.aatoronto.org/update-or-change-a-meeting/)

BETTER TIMES needs stories

Opinions expressed in *BETTER TIMES* are those of the authors and don't necessarily reflect those of the [GTA A.A. Intergroup](#). The Editor reserves the right to edit for length, content and grammar in accordance with layout and quality purposes. Submit group news, medallions, other event notices to: cc@aatoronto.org Letters or articles to the Editor (200—500 words) for *BETTER TIMES* at bettertimes@aatoronto.org



The 2022 Mississauga Fall
Roundup presents...

What's in Your Spiritual Toolbox?

October 1, 2022

8am – 3pm

Vic Johnston Community Centre

Tickets: \$25 (lunch included)

mississaugafallroundup.org

24/7/365

PHONE GREETERS ARE NEEDED

Sign up for a shift by emailing

12step@aatoronto.org

or call

416-487-5591

**ALCOHOLICS
ANONYMOUS**

Service: The Heart of A.A.



District 22 Service Day: Saturday, September 24, 2022

(in-person event) **Oakridge Community Center, 63 Pharmacy Ave.**

Day Event: 10 am-4 pm (opens 9am)

Come Join Us For...

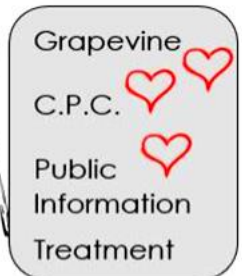
~Presentations by the various service committees

~ A Twelve Traditions Skit

~ A Pot Luck

Speaker:

Amy L., Area 83 Chair



Social Event 7pm – Midnight

Cost: \$15

(tickets sold at the door or from group GSRs)



Hi everybody! Hope you've all enjoyed the summer so far! With things opening, the Scarborough District 22 Service Day Committee has been busy planning our 44th annual event to be held in person on **Saturday, September 24** at the **Oakridge Community Centre** at 63 Pharmacy Ave.

The Centre is located just 2 blocks east of Victoria Park subway station, with plenty of on-site (FREE) parking. The theme for this year's event is **"Service: The Heart of A.A."**. The doors open at 9 am with the festivities beginning at 10 am. We'll have Committee Presentations followed by our speaker Amy L. from the [Liverpool Group](#), who is also the Area Committee Chair for [Area 83 Eastern Ontario International](#). That will be followed by a FREE scrumptious pot-luck lunch. The afternoon schedule includes the Committee Presentations that didn't get presented in the morning, as well as the always informative (and hilarious!) Traditions Skit. Any outstanding questions which had been placed into the Ask-it-basket will be answered, with the closing expected to be around 3 pm. This will allow participants

to go home, chill out and relax to be fresh for the evening social, where we will have a DJ playing tunes.

Attendance during the actual Service Day is FREE, including lunch and refreshments. Tickets to the District Social are \$15; the Social runs from 7 pm and concludes at 11 pm. All are welcome!

If circumstances change and for some reason the physical space at the Oakridge Community Centre becomes unavailable to us, we will automatically move to an on-line event. Access will be through our Scarborough District 22 zoom room meeting ID: 853 9263 4979 Passcode: 808085.

Whatever the case may be, I've always found participating in these Scarborough District 22 Service Days to be inspiring. It's a great way to meet like-minded people who are committed to service.

If you would like to help, contact Bert J. at adcmdistrict22@gmail.com Doesn't the theme, **"Service: The Heart of AA"** say it all?

Admitted, Powerless, Unmanageable

By Tom McN



These are the operative words contained in our [First Step](#). For those of us who are seeking to recover from this hopeless state of mind and body they are essential. To recover we must be entirely honest with ourselves in this regard. There can be no recovery without it.

It was imperative that I admit that I was powerless over alcohol and as a result my life had become unmanageable if I wished to recover. Of course, I did not know that when I came to the Fellowship, I knew that I was having a problem with alcohol and that I could not under any circumstances entirely stop drinking.

I have come to learn that the admission usually occurs prior to arriving at Alcoholics Anonymous, in a manner of speaking. In my case I was aware that I was having a problem with alcohol, or so I thought, long before I did something about it. The thought to do something about it came from what I now know to be my Higher Power.

I did not possess the ability to stop even though I had tried many ways of doing so, most of which are described in the [Big Book](#) of [Alcoholics Anonymous](#).

In my opinion the fact that I went to visit the man who [Twelfth-Stepped](#) me tells me that I had already admitted to myself that there was a problem.

To my mind I must ask myself why I would have been seeking information on rectifying the problem if I could not have recognized and admitted this fact to myself. Of course at the time that was not a thought in my conscious mind.

For me making the admission that I had a problem was the easiest part of the First Step. In [Chapter Four](#) of the Big Book there are two questions we must ask ourselves to determine if we are an alcoholic. If you are pondering the question look them up, answer them honestly and go forward from there. I can tell you after 42 years of sobriety the answers to the ques-

tions have not changed for me.

Turning to the second operative word in the Step: POWERLESS. Not a word that I would have employed in describing my problem but of course I knew nothing about alcoholism—the allergy or the obsession. But I did know that from time to time I would have tremendous urge to drink, but most of the time it was not a conscious decision; I simply drank. No matter what I did the day would come when I would drink. I did not have a problem every time I drank (or so I thought) though maybe it would have been better if I had. Such is the viciousness of this illness. Sometimes it's okay and most of the time it is not!

I had no control over my drinking. I made many promises not to overindulge but because I did not know anything about the first drink—not once did I ever think that it was the first drink that did me in.

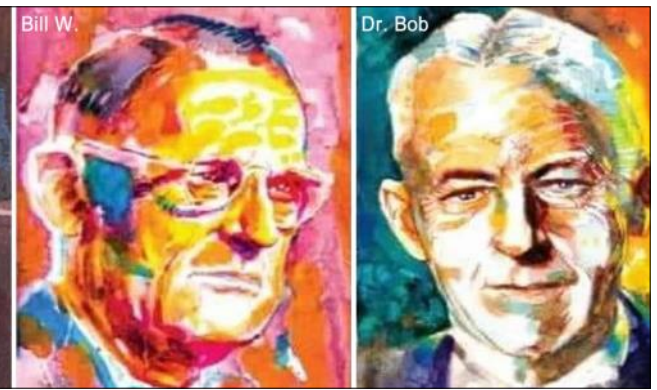
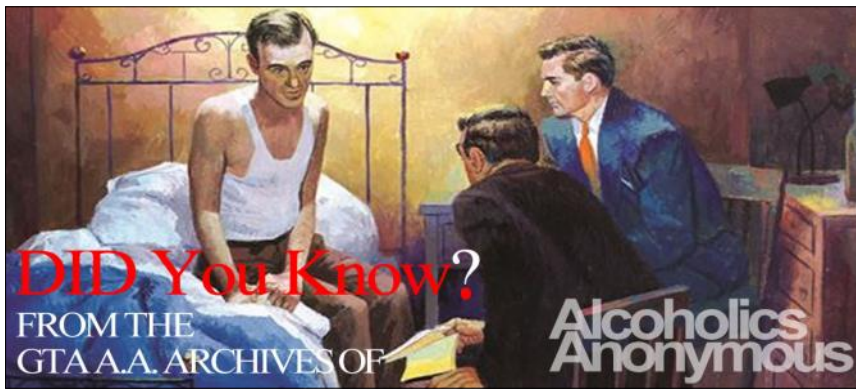
I don't recall ever saying that I would NOT drink. I did not possess the required tools on how to not drink, of course. Like most of us starting out on this journey I believed that alcohol was my problem. I learned early on that alcohol was not and never has been the problem: *alcoholism* is the problem.

Alcohol had complete control of me. Nothing else in my life has had the same power.

Turning to how my life was UNMANAGEBLE. The fact that I could not stop drinking no matter what I tried—the loss of jobs, car crashes, spending money I did not have, being careless with my health and well-being and that of my family, endangering those around me, not being a good employee, thinking only of myself and my wants—to name but a few.

In summation: without completing the First Step there will no recovery. Many times I have seen people come and go because this simple admission could not be honestly made. So *TAKE THE FIRST STEP*. Honestly. Truthfully. Get busy recovering.

--Tom McN., [Rexdale United Group](#)



- On Sept. 13, 1937 Florence R. (story in 1st edition [Big Book](#) "A Feminine Victory") is the first female A.A. in New York and she helped Fritz M. start the Washington Group. She returned to drinking in 1949 and eventually committed suicide.
- In Sept. 1940 the Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease reviewed the A.A. Big Book and said "of the inner meaning of alcoholism there is hardly a word".
- In Sept. 1948 the August Grapevine announced that based on a subscriber survey the September issue would be in a new pocketsize 5 1/2" x 7 1/2" format of 32 pages. In this issue of the Grapevine the [Serenity Prayer](#) was first printed and became a vital part of A.A.
- Between Sept. 1956 and Feb. 1957 A.A.'s popular slogan plaques were published in five Grapevine issues. Four slogans—"But for the Grace of God", "Easy Does It", "First Things First" and "Live and Let Live"—are from the Big Book. The slogan "Think, Think, Think" is a bit of a mystery. Some say it originated in Cleveland in the mid-1940's; however, its actual source is unknown.
- On Sept. 17, 1957 regarding [Archives](#) Bill Wilson wrote "It is highly important that the factual material be placed in our files in such a way there can be no substantial distortion."
- In Sept. 1973 Archives was established at [General Service Office](#) (GSO) in New York and Nell Wing, one of Bill's earliest secretaries, became the first archivist.
- On Sept. 19, 1975 Jack Alexander, author of early Saturday Evening Post articles on A.A., dies. The March 1941 article created national sensation. A.A. membership quadrupled in one year from 2,000 to 8,000.
- From Sept. 30 - Oct. 2, 1977 the 1st Eastern Canada Regional Forum was held in Ottawa with about 500 in attendance. Dr. Jack Norris, a non-alcoholic and Chairman of the Board had introduced these forums in 1975 in order to make members more familiar with the operations of the General Service Board and the General Service Office.
- On Sept. 12, 2001, A.A. trusted servants of NY Area 49 and the NY Intergroup Office organized A.A. meetings around the clock near Ground Zero for A.A. members engaged in rescue and emergency work at the 9/11 World Trade Center disaster. The Red Cross assigned A.A. rooms near the site. Members later constructed an iron plaque and presented it to GSO and the NY Intergroup as a memento.



OLD GTA MEETING BOOKS ARE NEEDED FOR THE GTA ARCHIVES
TO DONATE A.A. GTA ARCHIVAL ITEMS, PLEASE CONTACT THE
GTA ARCHIVIST EDDY G. at 416-536-7536



GREATER TORONTO AREA
INTERGROUP

Winter Season

Virtual Alkathon

Volunteers are
Needed!

- Tech Hosts and/or Virtual Greeters
- Secretary
- Tech Coordinator

*Zoom security
and hosting
experience
(while not a prerequisite)
is definitely an
asset!



*Interested? Please join us at our startup
Committee Meeting Mon Sept 12 8pm
(held virtually) ID: 823 3050 6592 PW: 434622
All volunteers welcome and encouraged to join
us! winterseasonvirtualalkathon@aatoronto.org*

Best Group In Town?

Contact bettertimes@aatoronto.org
to be featured in Better Times

GROUP SPOTLIGHT



BIG BOOK STUDY

1. What is the Answer? (Page 417)

2. The main problem of the alcoholic centers where? (Page 23)

3. But where and how were we to find this power? (Page 24)

WORD SEARCH

M	E	D	I	T	A	T	I	O	N	L	I	G	K	L	T	M	F	S	G	SPIRITUALITY
R	U	O	F	Y	T	X	I	S	E	N	O	Y	S	P	V	T	R	P	B	ONESIXTYFOUR
A	W	A	K	E	N	I	N	G	L	O	V	E	A	N	A	S	O	H	F	ACCEPTANCE
Z	W	T	U	K	U	N	O	I	T	A	R	O	I	R	E	T	E	D	F	HUMILITY
G	N	I	D	N	A	T	S	R	E	D	N	U	D	A	B	S	F	I	W	HONESTY
Z	C	S	P	R	A	Y	E	R	U	R	E	R	A	B	I	E	N	A	P	WILLINGNESS
W	V	S	V	I	M	W	U	E	I	M	O	T	V	D	X	A	P	Z	S	FAITH
E	K	E	H	W	C	L	E	C	Y	O	M	M	F	B	N	H	L	X	I	LOVE
R	H	N	T	E	Z	X	B	N	C	A	T	A	H	C	J	W	L	B	N	ACCOUNTABILITY
U	C	G	I	Q	X	H	I	A	B	C	D	Y	I	R	U	L	D	N	S	SERVICE
T	J	N	A	G	P	U	S	T	Y	C	O	A	A	T	Z	Y	P	Y	E	PRAYER
N	D	I	F	I	V	X	X	P	T	O	L	F	S	T	P	N	A	A	C	MEDITATION
E	I	L	T	N	W	E	L	E	I	U	S	Q	M	V	Q	K	T	A	U	MINFULNESS
M	W	L	H	K	P	Y	C	C	L	N	V	F	I	B	N	F	H	Y	R	UNDERSTANDING
T	A	I	B	E	Q	T	J	C	I	T	E	R	N	Y	G	X	O	H	I	RESENTMENT
N	E	W	G	L	S	I	O	A	M	A	X	S	D	S	A	M	L	U	T	TOLERANCE
E	K	V	X	B	E	L	E	C	U	B	Y	T	F	N	X	A	O	U	Y	FINANCIAL
S	C	G	V	A	R	A	L	C	H	I	C	E	U	I	L	T	G	L	D	INSECURITY
E	E	I	T	T	V	U	E	H	P	L	C	E	L	A	L	B	I	Y	D	SHIPWRECK
R	R	Y	X	W	I	T	G	U	D	I	S	R	N	T	C	Q	C	T	Y	CAPTAINS
I	W	K	V	T	C	I	F	G	I	T	P	A	E	P	B	X	A	S	A	TABLE
P	P	V	K	V	E	R	V	T	R	Y	C	G	S	A	E	H	L	E	C	PATHOLOGICAL
U	I	E	D	O	Z	I	T	X	J	J	V	E	S	C	C	M	S	N	U	DETERIORATION
G	H	U	C	S	S	P	J	T	M	M	A	X	O	Z	U	D	F	O	O	STEERAGE
K	S	I	L	R	L	S	C	A	T	O	L	E	R	A	N	C	E	H	N	AWAKENING

GROUPS BEGUN IN SEPTEMBER

Sept. 27, 1947- [Danforth Group](#)

Sept. 23, 1952- [St. Clements Group](#)

Sept. 29, 1957- [West York Group](#)

Sept. 17, 1964- [Long Branch Group](#)

Sept. 23, 1973- [Heron Park Sunday Morning Open Meeting](#)

Sept. 13, 1974- [Rexdale United Group](#)

Sept. 11, 1978- [Deer Park Group](#)

Sept. 6, 1979- [Stepping Stones Group](#)

Sept. 17, 1983- [Frontrunner's Group](#)

Sept. 16, 1990- [Sunday Scarboro Group](#)

Sept. 17, 2007- [Prince Edward Group](#)

Sept. 24, 2009- [Beyond Belief Group](#)

Sept. 7, 2010- [We Agnostics Group](#)



It was March 22, 2020. We had spaced the chairs in our large gymnasium so far apart and with an overly cautious radius so that we could only fit 20 people in a space with a fire code capacity of 200. This was to be our last in person meeting for four months.

So we went on zoom and didn't see each other for what seemed like an eternity. Members were relapsing, people were growing lonely, anxious, depressed. Something needed to change. Our [Grapevine](#) Rep mentioned he had a number of Grapevine magazines to get rid of. Given a slow summer of COVID-19 cases it was suggested we meet outdoors, purchase some Grapevines and have a meeting.

10 to 15 of us sat in the parking lot with our lawn chairs, saying the [Serenity Prayer](#) and meeting together in person once again. For alcoholics whose recovery was dependent on human connection this is what we needed.

At our online business meeting in late July 2020 a motion passed to reopen our Sunday night open meeting in August. We did so with social distancing and masks. Chairs were spaced out, masks were put on, people

brought their own beverages and the group was reopened in person. The mood changed. Various diasporas from other groups which had remained online joined our ranks and we soon had a regular and irregular group of alcoholics attending our meetings.

We soon added our Wednesday night closed discussion meeting and later our Monday night closed meeting as well. We reluctantly collected with first names only contact tracing sheets despite our worries about anonymity. Only once were these consulted out of fear of exposure. Now we run an open meeting with more attendance than pre-pandemic, and two lively discussion meetings that are sometimes so large we split into two groups. I have seen many people from their first day to their 1-year medallion even though it feels like yesterday that we reopened.

By reopening and running in person meetings with COVID safety in mind Bloordale set the stage for the benefit of the fellowship and a steppingstone for recovery from newcomers to old-timers

—Justin F., [Bloordale Group](#)

